

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1 1. A method for obtaining an item, comprising:
2 identifying a plurality of auctions in which an item is being auctioned; and
3 automatically submitting one or more bids to a plurality of the plurality of
4 auctions in order to obtain the item.

1 2. A method according to Claim 1, wherein the step of automatically
2 submitting one or more bids comprises:
3 identifying one of the plurality of the plurality of auctions having a lowest
4 next bid price for the item,
5 wherein a next bid price in a particular auction for a particular item is
6 based on a sum of a current bid price for the particular item in the particular
7 auction and a minimum bidding increment associated with the particular auction.

1 3. A method according to Claim 2, wherein the step of automatically
2 submitting one or more bids further comprises:
3 determining whether the lowest next bid price is greater than a maximum
4 bid price; and, if it is determined that the lowest next bid price is not greater than
5 the maximum bid price,
6 submitting to the one auction a bid for the item, the bid being based on the
7 lowest next bid price.

1 4. A method according to Claim 2, wherein the step of automatically
2 submitting one or more bids further comprises:
3 determining whether the lowest next bid price is greater than a maximum
4 bid price; and, if it is determined that the lowest next bid price is greater than a
5 maximum bid price,

6 presenting an indication that the lowest next bid price is greater than the
7 maximum bid price and determining another maximum bid price greater than the
8 lowest next bid price.

1 5. A method according to Claim 1, wherein the step of automatically
2 submitting one or more bids further comprises:
3 determining that a submitted bid has been surpassed; and
4 automatically submitting another bid to at least one of the plurality of the
5 plurality of auctions in order to obtain the item.

1 6. A method according to Claim 5, wherein the step of automatically
2 submitting another bid comprises:
3 identifying one of the plurality of the plurality of auctions having a lowest
4 next bid price for the item,
5 wherein a next bid price in a particular auction for a particular item is
6 based on a sum of a current bid price for the particular item in the particular
7 auction and a minimum bidding increment associated with the particular auction.

1 7. A method according to Claim 6, wherein the step of automatically
2 submitting another bid further comprises:
3 determining whether the lowest next bid price is greater than a maximum
4 bid price; and, if it is determined that the lowest next bid price is not greater than
5 the maximum bid price,
6 submitting to the one auction a bid for the item, the bid being based on the
7 lowest next bid price.

1 8. A method according to Claim 6, wherein the step of automatically
2 submitting another bid further comprises:

3 determining whether the lowest next bid price is greater than a maximum
4 bid price; and, if it is determined that the lowest next bid price is greater than a
5 maximum bid price,
6 presenting an indication that the lowest next bid price is greater than the
7 maximum bid price and determining another maximum bid price greater than the
8 lowest next bid price.

1 9. A method according to Claim 1, further comprising:
2 withdrawing a previously-submitted bid.

1 10. A method according to Claim 9, further comprising:
2 determining that the bid price of the previously-submitted bid is greater
3 than a sum of a next bid price of one of the plurality of auctions and a cost to
4 withdraw the previously-submitted bid.

1 11. A method according to Claim 1, wherein the step of automatically
2 submitting one or more bids comprises:
3 analyzing at least one of group bidding history and individual bidding
4 history.

1 12. A method according to Claim 1, wherein the step of automatically
2 submitting one or more bids comprises:
3 analyzing at least one of a bidding history for an item similar to the item, a
4 bidding history for items complementary to the item, and a bidding history for
5 items substitutable for the item.

1 13. A method according to Claim 3, wherein the maximum bid price is
2 based on market factors.

1 14. A method according to Claim 1, wherein the step of automatically
2 submitting one or more bids to a plurality of the plurality of auctions comprises:
3 automatically submitting one or more bids to a plurality of the plurality of
4 auctions in order to obtain more than one unit of the item.

1 15. A method for obtaining an item, comprising:
2 identifying a plurality of items; and
3 automatically submitting one or more bids to one or more auctions in order
4 to obtain one of the items.

1 16. A method for obtaining an item, comprising:
2 identifying an item; and
3 automatically submitting one or more bids to one or more auctions in order
4 to obtain a plurality of the item.

1 17. An apparatus, comprising:
2 a processor; and
3 a storage device in communication with said processor and storing
4 instructions adapted to be executed by said processor to:
5 identify a plurality of auctions in which an item is being auctioned;
6 and
7 automatically submit one or more bids to a plurality of the plurality
8 of auctions in order to obtain the item.

1 18. An apparatus according to Claim 17, wherein the stored instructions
2 adapted to be executed by said processor to automatically submit one or more
3 bids further comprise instructions adapted to be executed by said processor to:
4 identify one of the plurality of the plurality of auctions having a lowest next
5 bid price for the item,

6 wherein a next bid price in a particular auction for a particular item
7 is based on a sum of a current bid price for the particular item in the
8 particular auction and a minimum bidding increment associated with the
9 particular auction.

1 19. An apparatus according to Claim 18, wherein the stored instructions
2 adapted to be executed by said processor to automatically submit one or more
3 bids further comprise instructions adapted to be executed by said processor to:
4 determine whether the lowest next bid price is greater than a maximum
5 bid price; and, if it is determined that the lowest next bid price is not greater than
6 the maximum bid price,
7 submit to the one auction a bid for the item, the bid being based on the
8 lowest next bid price.

1 20. An apparatus according to Claim 18, wherein the stored instructions
2 adapted to be executed by said processor to automatically submit one or more
3 bids further comprise instructions adapted to be executed by said processor to:
4 determine whether the lowest next bid price is greater than a maximum
5 bid price; and, if it is determined that the lowest next bid price is greater than a
6 maximum bid price,
7 present an indication that the lowest next bid price is greater than the
8 maximum bid price and determining another maximum bid price greater than the
9 lowest next bid price.

1 21. An apparatus according to Claim 17, wherein the stored instructions
2 adapted to be executed by said processor to automatically submit one or more
3 bids further comprise instructions adapted to be executed by said processor to:
4 determine that a submitted bid has been surpassed; and

5 automatically submit another bid to at least one of the plurality of the
6 plurality of auctions in order to obtain the item.

1 22. An apparatus according to Claim 21, wherein the stored instructions
2 adapted to be executed by said processor to automatically submit another bid
3 further comprise instructions adapted to be executed by said processor to:
4 identify one of the plurality of the plurality of auctions having a lowest next
5 bid price for the item,
6 wherein a next bid price in a particular auction for a particular item is
7 based on a sum of a current bid price for the particular item in the particular
8 auction and a minimum bidding increment associated with the particular auction.

1 23. An apparatus according to Claim 22, wherein the stored instructions
2 adapted to be executed by said processor to automatically submit another bid
3 further comprise instructions adapted to be executed by said processor to:
4 determine whether the lowest next bid price is greater than a maximum
5 bid price; and, if it is determined that the lowest next bid price is not greater than
6 the maximum bid price,
7 submit to the one auction a bid for the item, the bid being based on the
8 lowest next bid price.

1 24. An apparatus according to Claim 22, wherein the stored instructions
2 adapted to be executed by said processor to automatically submit another bid
3 further comprise instructions adapted to be executed by said processor to:
4 determine whether the lowest next bid price is greater than a maximum
5 bid price; and, if it is determined that the lowest next bid price is greater than a
6 maximum bid price,

7 present an indication that the lowest next bid price is greater than the
8 maximum bid price and determining another maximum bid price greater than the
9 lowest next bid price.

1 25. An apparatus according to Claim 17, wherein the stored instructions
2 adapted to be executed by said processor further comprise instructions adapted
3 to be executed by said processor to withdraw a previously-submitted bid.

1 26. An apparatus according to Claim 25, wherein the stored instructions
2 adapted to be executed by said processor to withdraw a previously-submitted bid
3 further comprise instructions adapted to be executed by said processor to:
4 determine that the bid price of the previously-submitted bid is greater than
5 a sum of a next bid price of one of the plurality of auctions and a cost to withdraw
6 the previously-submitted bid.

1 27. An apparatus according to Claim 17, wherein the stored instructions
2 adapted to be executed by said processor to automatically submit one or more
3 bids further comprise instructions adapted to be executed by said processor to:
4 analyze at least one of group bidding history and individual bidding history.

1 28. An apparatus according to Claim 17, wherein the stored instructions
2 adapted to be executed by said processor to automatically submit one or more
3 bids further comprise instructions adapted to be executed by said processor to:
4 analyze at least one of a bidding history for an item similar to the item, a
5 bidding history for items complementary to the item, and a bidding history for
6 items substitutable for the item.

1 29. An apparatus according to Claim 19, wherein the maximum bid price
2 is based on market factors.

1 30. An apparatus according to Claim 17, wherein the stored instructions
2 adapted to be executed by said processor to automatically submit one or more
3 bids further comprise instructions adapted to be executed by said processor to:
4 automatically submit one or more bids to a plurality of the plurality of
5 auctions in order to obtain more than one unit of the item.

1 31. An apparatus, comprising:
2 a processor; and
3 a storage device in communication with said processor and storing
4 instructions adapted to be executed by said processor to:
5 identify a plurality of items; and
6 automatically submit one or more bids to one or more auctions in
7 order to obtain one of the items.

1 32. An apparatus, comprising:
2 a processor; and
3 a storage device in communication with said processor and storing
4 instructions adapted to be executed by said processor to:
5 identify an item; and
6 automatically submit one or more bids to one or more auctions in
7 order to obtain a plurality of the item.

1 33. A medium storing processor-executable process steps, the process
2 steps comprising:
3 a step to identify a plurality of auctions in which an item is being
4 auctioned; and
5 a step to automatically submit one or more bids to a plurality of the
6 plurality of auctions in order to obtain the item.

1 34. A medium according to Claim 33, wherein the step to automatically
2 submit one or more bids comprises:
3 a step to identify one of the plurality of the plurality of auctions having a
4 lowest next bid price for the item,
5 wherein a next bid price in a particular auction for a particular item is
6 based on a sum of a current bid price for the particular item in the particular
7 auction and a minimum bidding increment associated with the particular auction.

1 35. A medium according to Claim 34, wherein the step to automatically
2 submit one or more bids further comprises:
3 a step to determine whether the lowest next bid price is greater than a
4 maximum bid price; and, if it is determined that the lowest next bid price is not
5 greater than the maximum bid price,
6 a step to submit to the one auction a bid for the item, the bid being based
7 on the lowest next bid price.

1 36. A medium according to Claim 34, wherein the step to automatically
2 submit one or more bids further comprises:
3 a step to determine whether the lowest next bid price is greater than a
4 maximum bid price; and, if it is determined that the lowest next bid price is
5 greater than a maximum bid price,
6 a step to present an indication that the lowest next bid price is greater than
7 the maximum bid price and determining another maximum bid price greater than
8 the lowest next bid price.

1 37. A medium according to Claim 33, wherein the step to automatically
2 submit one or more bids further comprises:
3 a step to determine that a submitted bid has been surpassed; and

4 a step to automatically submit another bid to at least one of the plurality of
5 the plurality of auctions in order to obtain the item.

1 38. A medium according to Claim 37, wherein the step to automatically
2 submit another bid comprises:
3 a step to identify one of the plurality of the plurality of auctions having a
4 lowest next bid price for the item,
5 wherein a next bid price in a particular auction for a particular item is
6 based on a sum of a current bid price for the particular item in the particular
7 auction and a minimum bidding increment associated with the particular auction.

1 39. A medium according to Claim 38, wherein the step to automatically
2 submit another bid further comprises:
3 a step to determine whether the lowest next bid price is greater than a
4 maximum bid price; and, if it is determined that the lowest next bid price is not
5 greater than the maximum bid price,
6 a step to submit to the one auction a bid for the item, the bid being based
7 on the lowest next bid price.

1 40. A medium according to Claim 38, wherein the step to automatically
2 submit another bid further comprises:
3 a step to determine whether the lowest next bid price is greater than a
4 maximum bid price; and, if it is determined that the lowest next bid price is
5 greater than a maximum bid price,
6 a step to present an indication that the lowest next bid price is greater than
7 the maximum bid price and to determine another maximum bid price greater than
8 the lowest next bid price.

1 41. A medium according to Claim 33, the process steps further
2 comprising:
3 a step to withdraw a previously-submitted bid.

1 42. A medium according to Claim 41, the process steps further
2 comprising:
3 a step to determine that the bid price of the previously-submitted bid is
4 greater than a sum of a next bid price of one of the plurality of auctions and a
5 cost to withdraw the previously-submitted bid.

1 43. A medium according to Claim 33, wherein the step to automatically
2 submit one or more bids comprises:
3 a step to analyze at least one of group bidding history and individual
4 bidding history.

1 44. A medium according to Claim 33, wherein the step to automatically
2 submit one or more bids comprises:
3 a step to analyze at least one of a bidding history for an item similar to the
4 item, a bidding history for items complementary to the item, and a bidding history
5 for items substitutable for the item.

1 45. A medium according to Claim 35, wherein the maximum bid price is
2 based on market factors.

1 46. A medium according to Claim 33, wherein the step to automatically
2 submit one or more bids to a plurality of the plurality of auctions comprises:
3 a step to automatically submit one or more bids to a plurality of the
4 plurality of auctions in order to obtain more than one unit of the item.

1 47. A medium storing processor-executable process steps, the process
2 steps comprising:
3 a step to identify a plurality of items; and
4 a step to automatically submit one or more bids to one or more auctions in
5 order to obtain one of the items.

1 48. A medium storing processor-executable process steps, the process
2 steps comprising:
3 a step to identify an item; and
4 a step to automatically submit one or more bids to one or more auctions in
5 order to obtain a plurality of the item.